



## SUCCESS STORY

# New Sterilizer Improves Infection Control at Primary Health Care Dental Clinic in Kirkuk

*"Many thanks to USAID and PHCPI for supplying our clinic with the autoclave sterilizer. We are no longer afraid of spreading infection from patient to patient and we are now able to treat more patients per day due to the fast sterilization time of this equipment" said Mr. Mahmood, the Dental Assistant at Alton Kopri PHC Model Clinic in Kirkuk.*



The new autoclave supplied by to 36 model clinics in Iraq. Photo: USAID / PHCPI



A patient with a complicated dental extraction is treated late in the day at the Alton Kopri PHC Clinic due to the urgent nature of his dental condition. Photo: USAID / PHCPI

Decades of wars, embargos and sectarian violence in Iraq have caused the deterioration of basic government health services across the country and resulted in a decline in the health status of Iraqi citizens. USAID's Primary Health Care Project (PHCP) partners with Iraq's Ministry of Health (MOH) to strengthen its delivery of primary health care services throughout the country, focusing on mother and child health services for the most vulnerable Iraqis. The project also works with the Government of Iraq to improve the standard and quality of 36 "model" clinics to serve as a prototype for further national replication.

At Alton Kopri's Primary Health Care (PHC) Clinic in Kirkuk, that supports a catchment population of 20,000 residents and serves more than 250 clients per day, there was a significant number of patients contracting hepatitis due to inadequate and inefficient sterilization methods within the Clinic's Dental Unit, resulting in cross infection of patients. Additionally, the Dental Unit slowed down due to the time required to sterilize instruments using old equipment and as a result sometimes patients with urgent dental conditions could not be treated on the day they visited the PHC Clinic.

In September 2013 USAID's PHCPI supplied the Alton Kopri PHC Center Dental Clinic with a new autoclave that only requires 21 minutes to fully sterilize the dental instruments compared with 40 minutes required using the clinic's old sterilizer, thus increasing the number of patients who can be treated at the clinic each day. Previously dental patients at Alton Kopri PHC Clinic usually had to wait for hours to see the dentist, with sometimes up to 30% of the dental clients being asked to return the next day. Since the arrival of the new autoclave at the clinic, now all dental patients can be treated on the same day with minimal wait time and without risk of infection.